

**RHODE ISLAND BOARD OF REGENTS FOR ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION
MINUTES OF MEETING – OCTOBER 25, 2007**

A meeting of the Rhode Island Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education was held at the Shepard Building - 255 Westminster Street, Providence, RI 02903 and convened at 4:10 p.m.

In Attendance:

R. Flanders, P. Guida, C. Callahan, A. Beretta and K. Forbes.

Public Remarks

Steve Nardelli, Executive Director of the Rhode Island League of Charter Schools thanked the Regents for their support of Charter Schools. He spoke about the benefits of the partnership between the charter schools, the Department of Education and the Board of Regents.

Chairman's Remarks

Chairman Flanders told the members of the board that he will be making recommendations for the task force that will be examining the teacher contracting process. The Governor has asked for recommendations by the next legislative session. He has decided that, because of the difficulties of working with a very large group, he will be forming a small Regents committee that will hold working meetings with stakeholders to get their input. The department will assist with the reach out to constituency groups and research what is being done in other states. The Chairman will be speaking with the Regents individually to get their input on the formation of the task force.

Approval of Minutes

MOVED AND SECONDED: That, the minutes of the Rhode Island Board of Regents Meeting of September 27, 2007 be approved, as presented.

VOTE: Approved unanimously.

Approval of Members to the William M. Davies Career and Technical School

RIDE staff member, Keith Oliveira, presented the agenda item for consideration. He briefly outlined the process for appointing new members to the Davies Board and reviewed the qualifications of each candidate. Regent Beretta asked about the diversity of the current board and what is being done to ensure diversity. The Chairman of the Davies Board assured the group that the diversity of the Davies Board is a top priority and that they continue to look for candidates that will add diversity.

MOVED AND SECONDED: THAT, The Rhode Island Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education Approve the Appointments of Mr. John G. Quinn, Mr. John A. Nardolillo, and Mr. Raymond M. Chartier as Members to the Davies Career & Technical School Board of Trustees.

VOTE: Approved Unanimously.

Preliminary Approval of Charter Schools

RIDE Staff member, Keith Oliveira presented the two charter schools – the Segue Institute for Learning Charter School and the Urban League Middle College Charter School for consideration for preliminary approval. He said that the schools would have to come back in the spring for final approval.

Segue Institute for Learning Charter School in Central Falls would serve as an alternate to the Calcutt Middle School, which is currently experiencing a space shortage. Approval of this charter school would greatly alleviate the space issue.

The Urban League Charter School, which will be located in East Providence, will focus on math and science, but also bring in dual enrollment opportunities.

MOVED AND SECONDED: THAT, the Rhode Island Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education Grant Preliminary Approval to the Segue Institute for Learning Charter School for Further Planning and Development.

VOTE: Approved Unanimously.

MOVED AND SECONDED: THAT, the Rhode Island Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education Grant Preliminary Approval to the Urban League Middle College Charter School for Further Planning and Development.

VOTE: Approved Unanimously.

Budget Update

RIDE Director of the Office of Finance, Carolyn Dias said that RIDE is moving forward and working on the two budgets – the department budget which was prepared according to the state budget office directive and the Regents budget which will include additional funding for Regents priorities and a re-alignment of dollars realized from savings. The Commissioner told the group that the state schools – Davies and the School for the Deaf are “feeling the pressure” of the budget cuts and are working with the department to realize those cuts. He also reported that there is a critical meeting scheduled for tomorrow with the Department of administration to clarify the proposed cuts and to reconcile the personnel numbers.

Discussion of Legislative Issues

RIDE Chief of Staff, Clark Greene and RIDE Specialist for Legislative Affairs, Andy Andrade distributed a package to capture the Regents goals and priorities. The group then reviewed the major goals and priorities, as follows:

- Stability and coherence in the state’s education system – Financing and Governance
- High expectations for every student – closing gaps and raising proficiency; and
- Empowered professionals in every district, school and classroom – Educator Quality.

Report on NASBE Annual Conference

Regent Forbes reported that, as part of the NASBE annual conference, she had attended a NASBE Policy Symposium on Healthy Eating. During those meetings her group worked on the physical education standards and guidelines which are due to be released soon.

Regent Callahan reported that she had participated in a K-16 conversation and that Rhode Island is well positioned in the national conversation. She also reported that, as part of her work with NASBE on adolescent literacy, she led a group on the release of that report.

Regent Guida reported on his work on the NASBE Government Affairs Committee. He reported on the re authorization of NCLB – that it might not happen in this legislative session and if it doesn't, it would be at least two years before it would be reauthorized. He said that the states continue to struggle with alternative assessments, accountability systems and mediation processes.

Commissioner's Report

Commissioner McWalters reported on the following:

- He had participated with the Governor at the Wallace National Conference. He reported that the conference was very successful and that along with Governor Carcieri, the Governors from Kansas and Pennsylvania are all being thought of as the Education Governors. Much of the conversation targeted teacher quality issues.
- And had joined Steve Smith on a panel to work on education and finance issues in the city of Providence. Much of that work is focusing on how to get agreements between labor and management.

Executive Agenda

As per R.I.G.L. 42-46-5-(2), the meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m. for Executive Session.

The meeting reconvened to open session at 5:20 p.m.

Chairman Flanders reported that no votes had been taken in Executive Session.

Adjournment

With unanimous consent, the meeting adjourned at 5:25 p.m.